

Stillaguamish Shellfish Protection Program

Briefing for Snohomish County Council,
Public Works Committee

Snohomish County Campus, Everett
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Presented by:

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Photo: Stillaguamish River flowing into Port Susan

Briefing Outline

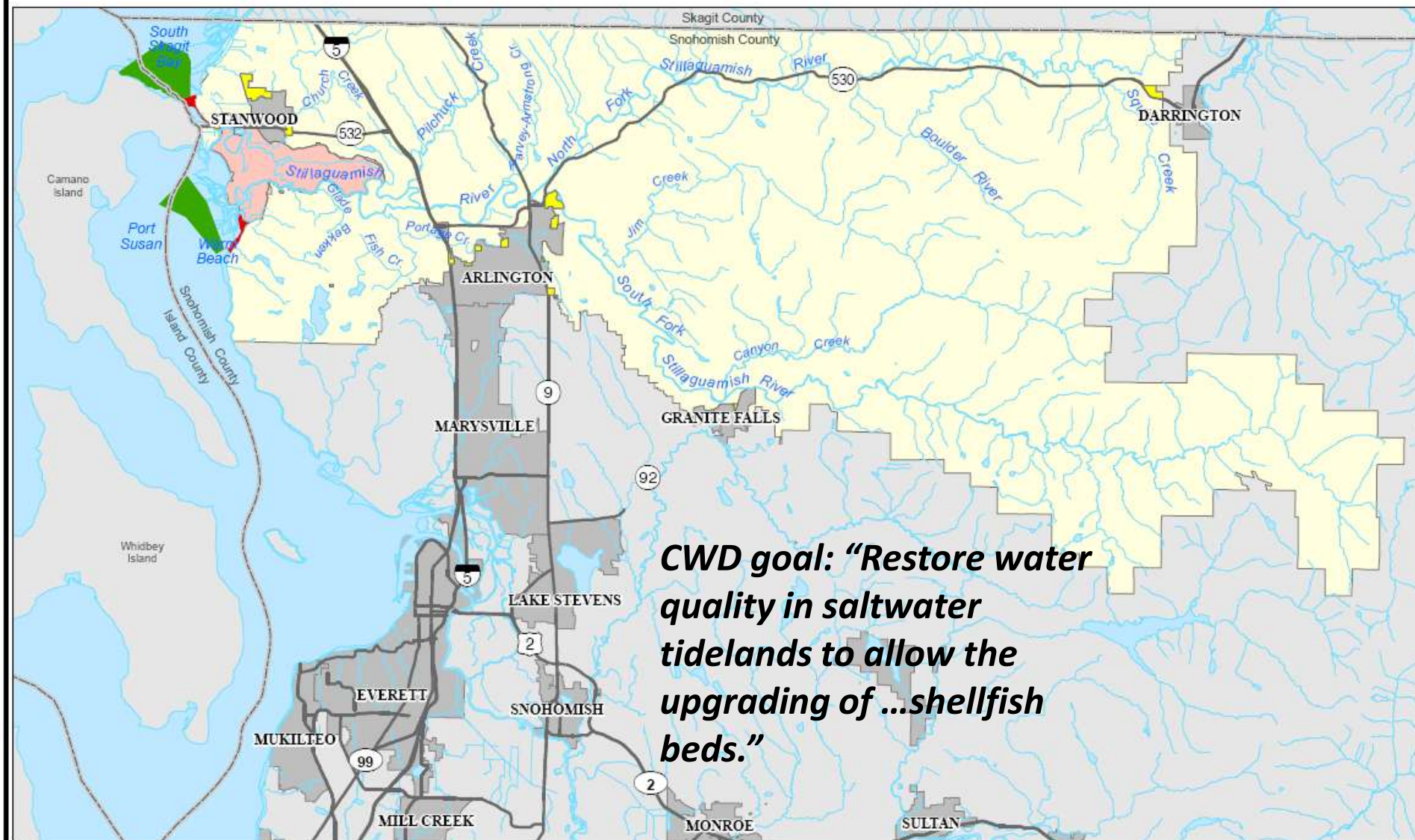
1. Purpose of Briefing
2. Background
3. Shellfish Protection Issue
4. Shellfish Protection Program Overview
5. Questions

Purpose of Briefing

Inform Council on County's *Stillaguamish Shellfish Protection Program* (Shellfish Program)



2010 Stillaguamish Clean Water District (CWD)



CWD goal: "Restore water quality in saltwater tidelands to allow the upgrading of ...shellfish beds."



- Stillaguamish CWD
- Stillaguamish CWD Drainage Surcharge Area
- Stillaguamish Flood Control District

Commercial Shellfish Growing Areas

- Approved
- Prohibited



Background

- RCW 90.72 CWD revenues collected to address non-point pollution that impacts shellfish harvest
- Since 2007, CWD Advisory Board has recommended County prioritize shellfish protection
- SWM working with stakeholders to develop and implement Shellfish Program
- Recent amendments to RCW 90.72 require County to have shellfish protection program and report shellfish revenues and expenditures annually to WA Dept. of Health

Shellfish Protection Issue

1. State-wide: 30,000 acres of shellfish tidelands closed in 1980s due to bacteria pollution
2. South Skagit Bay and Port Susan: 18,000 acres closed
3. Primary sources of bacteria pollution: people, livestock, pets, wildlife
4. Most CWD residents don't have strong interest in shellfish harvest, but they do care about clean water
5. Commercial shellfish classification is useful indicator of clean water and environmental health

WA Dept. of Health

Shellfish Classification Process

1. Conduct a **shoreline survey** and evaluate potential pollution from sewage treatment plants, onsite sewage systems, animal farms, drainage ways, and wildlife.
2. Collect **marine water quality samples** to determine fecal coliform bacteria levels.
3. Analyze how weather conditions, tides, currents, and other factors may affect the **distribution of pollutants** in the area.
4. Synthesize analyses in a **sanitary survey report** including recommendations for classification.

Commercial Shellfish Growing Area Classifications

Approved: commercial harvest open

Conditionally Approved: conditional or seasonal closures

Restricted: must move product to Approved area

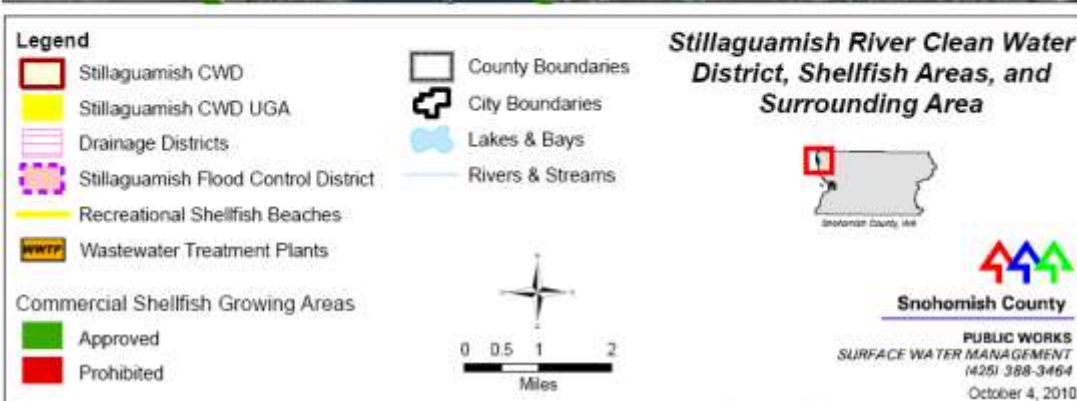
Prohibited: commercial harvest closed

Unclassified: not monitored, commercial harvest closed

Current Status of Commercial Shellfish Growing Areas

South Skagit Bay:
2,200 acres Approved

Port Susan:
1,800 acres Approved



Site #	Growing Area Name
1	Drayton Harbor
2	Samish Bay
3	South Skagit Bay
4	Mystery Bay
5	Port Townsend
6	Dyes Inlet
7	Burley Lagoon
8	Pacific Coast
9	Grays Harbor
10	Naselle River



South Skagit Bay is one of 10 “threatened” commercial shellfish growing areas in Washington State.

“Threatened” means at least one water sampling station passes water quality standards but shows bacteria levels near the limit of the standard. *It is an early warning indicator.*

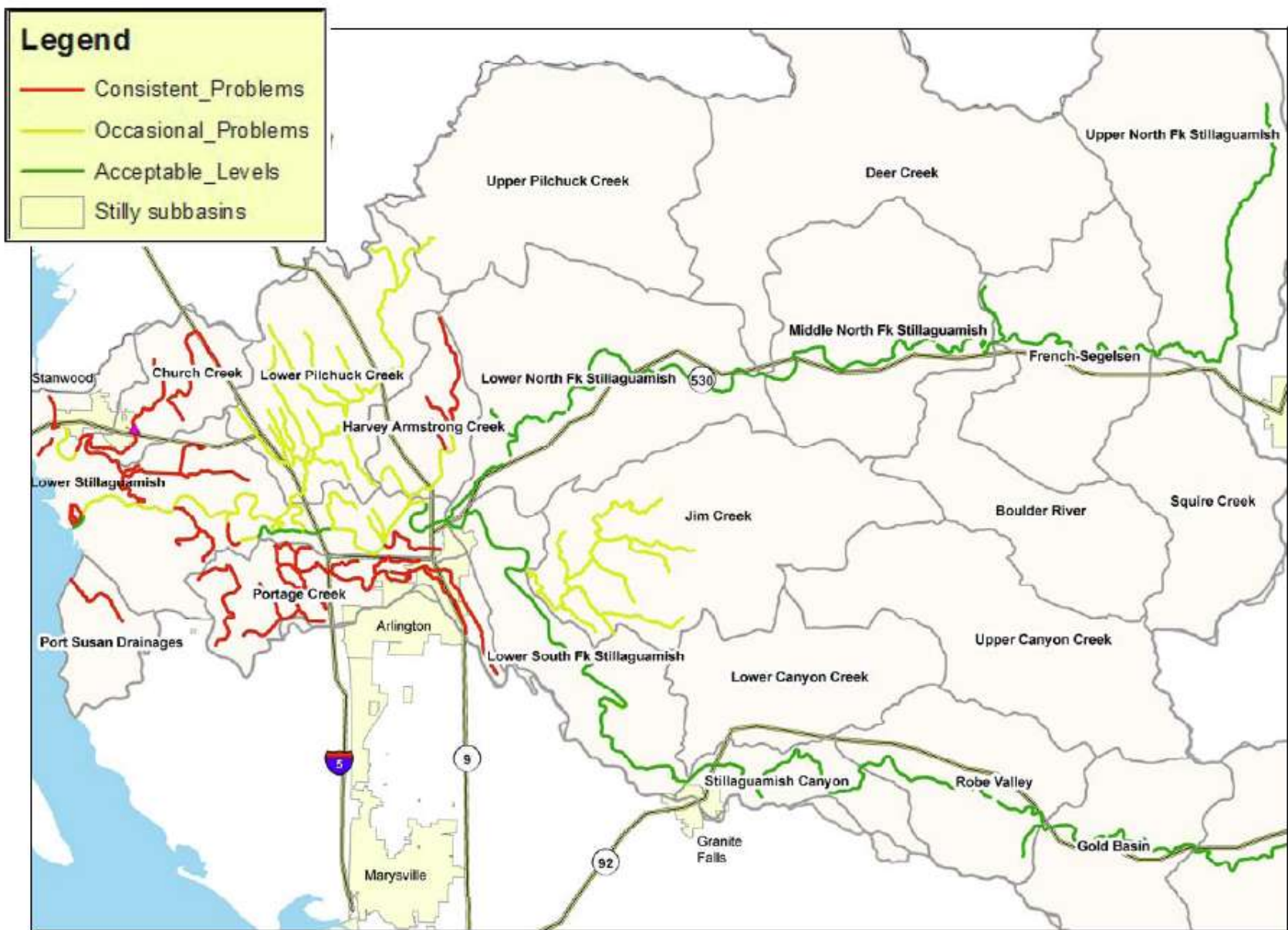


Figure 7. Bacteria concentrations in the Stillaguamish Watershed. Areas shown in red exceed state standards throughout the year. Yellow indicates problems during either dry (June-October) or wet (November-May) weather, but not both. Green areas meet standards year round. Data were collected after 2000 through monthly or quarterly monitoring. Compliance/noncompliance areas are based on sampling performed at, or close to, the most downstream point of each colored water segment.

Stillaguamish Shellfish Protection Program Overview

- Collaborative Process
- Steering Committee and Other Stakeholders
- Shellfish Protection Goals
- Snohomish County Actions



Collaborative Process

- CWD Advisory Board recommended SWM work with stakeholders to develop “**shellfish restoration plan**”
- SWM convened shellfish stakeholder **steering committee** to help scope and develop the plan
- For **implementation by various partners**



Shellfish Steering Committee

- Tulalip Tribes
- Stillaguamish Tribe
- WA Dept. of Agriculture
- WA Dept. of Ecology
- WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
- WA Dept. of Health
- Island County
- Snohomish Conservation District
- Snohomish Health District
- Warm Beach Christian Camp

Other Stakeholders

- Swinomish and Upper Skagit tribes
- WA Dept. of Natural Resources
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Skagit County
- Cities of Stanwood and Arlington
- Marine Resource Committees (MRCs)
- Non-tribal commercial shellfish harvesters
- Recreational shellfish harvesters
- Tideland owners
- Warm Beach residents
- Stillaguamish River Flood Control District
- Twin City Foods
- Commercial farmers
- The Nature Conservancy

Shellfish Protection Goals

Goal 1: Reduce Bacterial Pollution Affecting Shellfish Areas

Goal 2: Foster Self-Sustaining and Harvestable Shellfish Populations

Goal 3: Raise Public Awareness about Status and Trends of Water Quality and Shellfish

Goal 4: Adaptively Manage Work Programs to Achieve Shellfish Protection Goals

Goal 1: Reduce Bacterial Pollution

- 1.1 **Identify and monitor bacterial pollution sources**
- 1.2 Ensure **onsite septic systems** are not contributing to bacterial pollution
- 1.3 Reduce bacterial pollution from **recreational areas**
- 1.4 Maintain and improve **wastewater treatment and conveyance systems**
- 1.5 Reduce bacterial pollution from **livestock waste**
- 1.6 Reduce bacterial pollution from **pet waste**
- 1.7 Improve **municipal stormwater** pollution control

Goal 2: Foster Harvestable Shellfish

- 2.1 Assess existing shellfish populations and species
- 2.2 Identify potential users and harvest potential
- 2.3 Enhance shellfish populations



Goal 3: Raise Public Awareness

3.1 Public outreach

3.2 Reconnect the community to the shellfish resource



Goal 4: Adaptive Management

4.1 Annual review and update

4.2 Annual reporting



Snohomish County Actions

Program Development and Coordination

- SWM designated “Shellfish Protection Coordinator” to facilitate implementation with partners
- Integrating with NPDES municipal stormwater permit
- Integrating with Snohomish County MRC
- Cooperative work planning with Stanwood, Flood Control District, and Warm Beach Camp

Snohomish County Actions (cont.)

Non-Point Pollution Source Identification

- Long-term monthly water quality monitoring
- Bacteria Contaminant Source Survey with stakeholders
- Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination (IDDE)
- Water Quality Complaint Investigation

Snohomish County Actions (cont.)

Human Sanitary Waste

- Snohomish County Septic Systems grant with Snohomish Health District
- CWD sanitarian services contract with Snohomish Health District

Livestock Waste

- CWD Farm Outreach contract with Snohomish Conservation District

Pet Waste

- Snohomish County Pet Waste Program

Snohomish County Actions (cont.)

Public Awareness

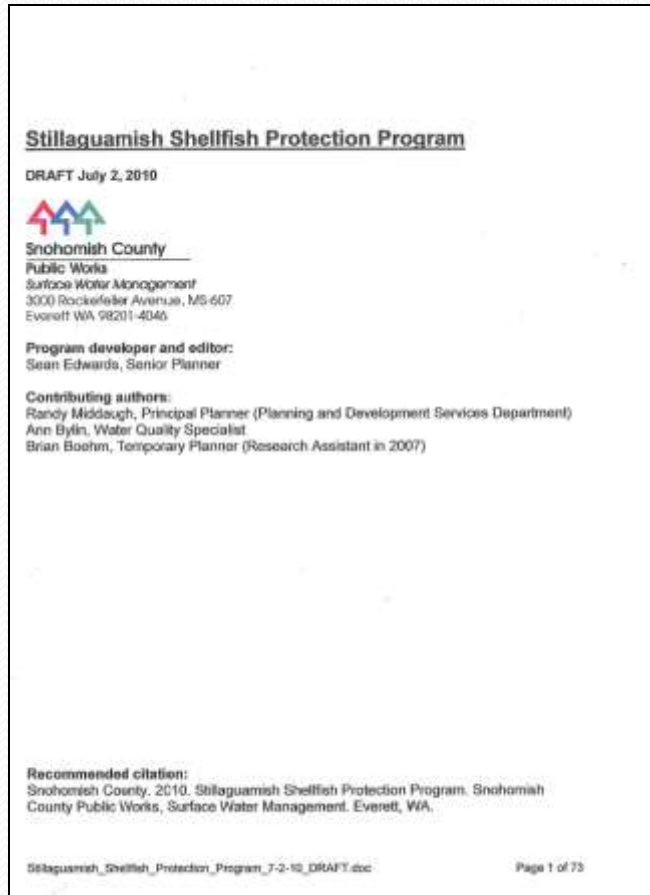
- CWD Discretionary Fund
- CWD web site
- CWD brochure
- Shoreline resident workshops
- Technical assistance to CWD residents
- CWD Education and Outreach Strategy



Snohomish County Actions (cont.)

Program Submittal

- SWM submitted draft *Stillaguamish Shellfish Protection Program* to WA Dept. of Health on 7/3/10
- SWM will submit final Shellfish Program on 11/1/10



Questions

For more information about the
Stillaguamish River Clean Water District:
<http://cwd.surfacewater.info>

Photo: South Fork Skagit River flowing into Skagit Bay